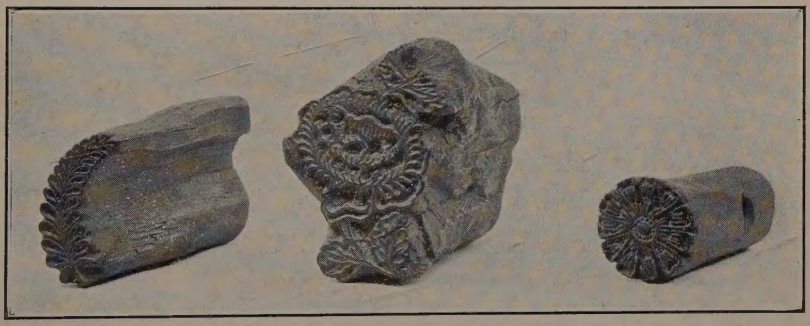
Rhode Island Historical Society Collections

Vol. XX October, 1927 No. 4



Blocks used for printing calico in East Greenwich, R. I. in 1789.

From the Society's Museum

Issued Quarterly

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RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COLLECTIONS

Vol. XX October, 1927 No. 4

G. ALDER BLUMER, *President* GILBERT A. HARRINGTON, *Treasurer*
HOWARD W. PRESTON, *Secretary* HOWARD M. CHAPIN, *Librarian*

The Society assumes no responsibility for the statements or the opinions of contributors.

Calico Printing Blocks

The wooden printing blocks, illustrated on the cover of this issue of our *Collections,* were used in East Greenwich, R. I. in 1789, and are perhaps the oldest American calico printing blocks now extant. They belong to the Society, and were loaned to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York this summer for their "Retrospective Exhibition of Painted and Printed Fabrics."

Perry Walton, in the "Story of Textiles," (p. 162) referring to the year 1788, wrote: "In the meantime, calico printing had been introduced by Herman Vandausen, a German calico printer, who settled in East Greenwich. He cut his design on wood, and printed for those who homespun calico. This calico was little inferior to that imported from India, but Mr. Moses Brown, who was then trading with India, and to whom the domestic cloth was shown, decided it was cheaper to import the Indian fabrics."

The first calico printer in Rhode Island was James Franklin of Newport, who printed calico at Boston as early as 1720, and later at Newport. (See "American Collector" for October 1926).

Some samples of early printed cloth were also loaned by the Society to the Museum, and are listed in the catalogue of the exhibition.

John Thorp

John Thorp, who is described by Mr. C. H. Clark, Editor of the "Textile World," as "one of the world's greatest textile inventors," was a resident of Providence. He is styled a machinist in the Providence directories up to 1832, but in the 1836 directory he is listed as a machine-maker.

The "Textile World," in its August 27 issue, suggested that a centennial celebration be held in Providence in 1928 to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Thorp's greatest invention, the ring spinning frame. The "Textile World" prints the following tribute to Thorp:

> "Thorp's 'rotary ring and revolving hook' (the latter corresponding to the traveler) was only one of his many inventions; his first recorded patent was granted March 28, 1812, for a 'hand and water loom,' and his last Sept. 27, 1844, for improvements on his original rotary ring invention. He antedated Charles Danforth by less than six months in applying for a patent on the process of cap spinning, and it is Thorp's and not Danforth's principle that is still utilized. He also invented a narrow fabric loom, and a total of seven spinning and twisting patents are credited to him.
>
> "Thorp's rotary ring and hook invention, which embodies the basic principles of modern ring spinning was granted Nov. 20, 1828, and it is the purpose of this brief review of his important contribution to the textile industry to awaken interest in adequate celebration of the centenary of this great American invention and the erection of a suitable memorial to Thorp's memory. The subject has been called to the attention of The National Association of Cotton Manufacturers and the Southern New England Textile Club and both are sounding trade sentiment, the latter through a special committee.
>
> "Thorp is not the only great American textile inventor and manufacturer whose contribution to the

industry and whose memory are neglected. In fact, none, with the possible exception of Whitney and Samuel Slater, have been accorded proper recognition." Lack of biographical and historical data in readable form has bred ignorance and this is primarily responsible for the lack of interest and neglect.

Greene Letters

Mr. Samuel Ward Greene has presented to the Society a collection of valuable and interesting papers, known as the "Mrs. Margaret Greene of Potowomut Collection of Letters."

Mrs. Greene was the widow of John W. Greene, nephew of General Nathanael Greene. This remarkable collection includes two letters of George Washington, one of Lafayette, one of Martha Washington and one of Nathanael Greene. The letters are as follows:

Head Quarters 16th Novemr. 1777

Dear Sir

I imagine from yours of last Evening by Major Ballard that the Fort was totally evacuated last night. As Major Fleury is wounded, you may probably want an Engineer below. I have therefore sent Monsr. L'Aumois the Bearer of this. He is recommended as a Gentleman of Abilities in his profession.

I am Dear Sir

Yr. most obt. Servt.

Go Washington

P. S. It is not intended that Monsr. L'Aumois should interfere with Capt Duplessis in the defence of Fort Mercer, except by Advice.

[Endorsed]

To

Brigr. Genl. Varnum

at

Fort Mercer

Favd. by

Monsr. L'Aumois.

White Marsh Nov$^{r.}$ 4$^{th.}$ 1777

Dear Sir

The inclosed I had written to Col$^{o.}$ Green before your favor of yesterday reached my hands.—I am happy in receiving so favorable a report, as your Letter contains, of the situation of the Forts—I most devoutly wish that the exertions of your self and Officers may be crowned with the success that so good a cause, and such labours, deserve.

My letters to Comodore Hazelwood, & Col$^{o.}$ Green, go unopened under this cover, that you may read—Seal—& deliver them.—If the measure proposed in the letter to Col$^{o.}$ Green can be carried into execution no time should be lost.—I thank you for your endeavours to restore confidence between the Comodore & Smith—I find something of the same kind existing between Smith and Mons$^{r.}$ Fleury, who I consider as a very valuable officer.—How strange it is that Men, engaged in the same Important Service, should be eternally bickering, instead of giving mutual aid—officers cannot act upon proper principles who suffer trifles to interpose to create distrust, & jealousy—All our actions should be regulated by one uniform Plan—& that Plan should have one object only in view, to wit, the good of the service.—where this is the case, although there may be a diversity of opinion there can be no real obstruction—I hope all these little rubs will be done away by your prudent management

I am D^{r} S$^{r.}$
Your most Obe$^{t.}$ Serv$^{t.}$
G^{o} Washington

What force have the Enemy at Billings port?—Is there a moral certainty (with your force) of driving them from thence?—If there is, I have no objection to the attempt, but wish circumstances to be well considered before any resolution is come to.—

[Endorsed]
Gen^{l} Washington
Letter 4$^{th.}$ Nov$^{r.}$ 1777
Brig^{r} Gen^{l} Varnum.

No, My dear friend, I will not go to la Grange Before Friday, and that for two or three days, So that to morrow I will be Very Happy to Be presented to Miss Alexander if she Honours with Her Company My daughter and Her friend's friend.

I am very Sorry to Hear My dear Jane is Again indisposed. Most affectionately

Yours

Lafayette

Philadelphia—3d March 1797

My Dear Madam

Your favor of the 3d of December came safe to hand, and gave us the pleasure of hearing that you and the family were all well.—That you may remain so, is my sincear wish.—

we were much indebted to your politness for the Orranges you had the goodness to ship for us: but the severity of the frost preventing the vessel from getting into this River, and forcing it to New York, we had not the oppertunity of eating your health—in them; but we are not the less obliged by your kind intentions.—

my love and thanks to Miss Greene for her intention to finish the goddess of liberty: as a reward for which, the President (who you know is always expressing his best wishes that girls may be provided for in that way) hopes in her marriage, and that soon, she may find a god like man.—

The winter has been very sevear hear, and upon the whole dull;—but is now moderating and drawing to a close, with which the curtain will fall on our public life; and place us on a more tranquil theater.— The President and Nelly Custis (Washington is at Princeton College) unite with me in wishing you and all who are dear to you, every possable happyness

I am dear madam your affectionate Friend and Hble servant

m Washington

The President of the United States and Mrs. Washington, request the Pleasure of Mr. & Mrs. Greene's & Mr. Nightingale's *Company to Dine, on* Wednesday *next, at* 4 *o'Clock,* 25 Jany *1796.*

*An answer is requested.**

*The words in italics are engraved.

My dear Angel

What I have been dreading has come to pass. His Excellency General Washington by order of Congress has appointed me to the command of the Southern Army. Gen Gates being recalled to under an examination into his conduct. This is so foreign from my wishes that I am distressed exceedingly: especially as I have just received your letter of the 2d of this Month where you describe your distress and sufferings in such a feeling manner as melts my soul into the deepest distress.

I have been pleasing my self with the agreeable prospect of spending the winter here with you; and the moment I was appointed to the command I sent off Mr Hubbard to bring you to camp. But alas before we can have the happiness of meeting, I am ordered away to another quarter. How unfriendly is war to domestic happiness.

I wish it was possible for me to stay until your arrival; but from the pressing manner which the General urges my setting out I am afraid you will come too late to see me.

I have written to the General for permission to spend a few days here before I set out in order to prepare my Self for the Journey; and shall wait his answer before I forward an Express to advertize you whether to come forward or return. In the mean time I wish you to come forward as fast as the State of the roads, the condition of your health, and the circumstances of the weather will permit. Let me beg of you not to travel too hard, as you cannot gain much time by it; and will only injure your health, horses and carriages. To come to me sick will only add to my distress, as it will wound my feelings to leave you in ill health

Should the General order me on without waiting a few days for your arrival, I will send you an Express to save you the disagreeable ride over the Mountains of this State.

God bless you my love and support your spirits under ————————* which will be doubly affecting from the disappointment.—With the truest love and sinsereest affection

I am yours

N Greene

[Marginal note. 1780]

*Torn and illegible.

Head Quarters So: Army near Speedwell Terrace
in North Carolina 19th March 1781

Dear Maddam,

While I follow the fortunes of my Friend Gl. Greene and partake the arduous and dangerous duties of a Southern Campaign, I cannot be unmindful of those more agreeable circumstances of War which first introduced me to him and to his amiable Consort. I reflect with infinite Satisfaction on those Scenes which so gayly Variegated the Campaigns of '78 and '79 and please myself with the Expectation of retaining to and renewing an intimacy with those cheerful spirits which used to render Society in the Northern Army so Charming.

We have been worsted in a general Action, But not defeated. General Greene and the Army are in high Spirits. We care only for our Friends and defy our Foes. The next Day may be ours, and we wish it may be soon, that we may the Sooner return to those we Love. My Love to Geo: and Ray

I am with very great Esteem

Yr. most Sincere and
Obedt Hble Servt

O. H. Williams

Mrs. Greene

[Endorsed]

Mrs Greene
Rhode Island
Col Williams

he Barl Trenton Eqr. Ower Repaing to take the Crew from the wrack a Brig Eastmir Eqr William Winslow of
Newd Rhode Island on the 3d February 1844.

From engraving in Shepley Library

The Ship George Washington

The picture on page 110 is from an oil painting in the Rhode Island Historical Society library, which was presented to the Society by Robert P. Brown, son of W. Whipple Brown, part owner of the vessel. This picture shows the ship *George Washington* entering the port of Liverpool, and was presumably painted in England. The *George Washington* was built at Barneyville on the Warren river, and sailed from Warren, R. I. in the foreign trade in the early part of the nineteenth century.

She is probably identical with the ship *George Washington* of Newport, which was commanded by Capt. Simeon Martin, Jr., in 1805. A pitcher, ornamented with the picture of a ship and the inscription "George Washington Capt. Simeon Martin, Jr.," is owned by Mrs. Frederick Allien, who lives in the old Martin house in Swansea, Mass., across the river from Barneyville.

An examination of the marine intelligence for the years 1805, 1806 and 1807 in the "Herald of the United States," which was published in Warren, R. I., discloses the fact that only one "Ship *George Washington*" is mentioned.

This ship *George Washington* was commanded by Captain Martin. She arrived at Newport from Cronstadt in October, 1805 (Herald Oct. 12), and sailed for New Orleans in November (H. Nov. 30). In the following year she arrived at Newport from Cronstadt in November (H. Nov. 8), and sailed for New Orleans in December (H. Dec. 20). There is a discrepancy in the newspaper accounts of her arrival at New Orleans. The "Herald" (Warren), under the date of Feb. 7, 1807, contains the following entry:

> "Arrived at New Orleans, Jan. 6th, ship George Washington, Martin, from Newport. (Capt. Martin was drowned at Pluckamin)."

The "Providence Gazette" for Feb. 7, 1807 says:

> "At New Orleans, Jan. 8; ship George Washington, Martin, of Newport. Capt. Martin was drowned at Pluckemin."

The Ship George Washington

From oil painting in the Society's Museum

The issue of Feb. 14 expands the account of Martin's death:

> "Drowned near the city of New Orleans, on the 28th of Dec. last, Capt. Simeon Martin of the ship George Washington of Newport in the 24th year of his age. His early loss will be lamented by all who knew his worth."

The "Martin Genealogy" states that Captain Martin was son of Hon. Simeon Martin, Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island, and quotes the following memorandum written by Lieutenant Governor Martin:

> "Our dutiful and beloved son, late Captain of the ship 'George Washington,' was drowned on 3d January, 1807, in the river at New Orleans, opposite Fort Plankmere, by lowering down the boat from the stern of the ship when she had too much headway, and hove him and Edwin Gardner into the river. Gardner by great exertion and encouragement from his Captain, swam ashore. Simeon swam within one rod of the shore when he sank and was never seen again."

Notes

The following persons have been elected to membership in the Society:

Governor Aram J. Pothier	Mr. Robert W. Herrick
Mrs. Walter R. Callender	Mr. William A. Hill
Mr. Prescott O. Clarke	Mrs. William L. Manchester
Mr. Alfred U. Eddy	Hon. Louis Monast
Mr. Bernon E. Helme	Mrs. Ruthven T. Slade

The Committee on Marking Historical Sites placed two historical tablets with appropriate exercises during the summer.

On Wednesday, July 27, the following tablet was dedicated at Bristol:

THIS MONUMENT MARKS THE HOME LOT OF
CAPTAIN BENJAMIN CHURCH
CONQUEROR OF KING PHILIP 1676
FIRST DEPUTY TO REPRESENT THIS TOWN IN THE
GENERAL COURT OF THE COLONY OF NEW PLYMOUTH
1682-1684

On Saturday, September 10, the following tablet was dedicated at the Commodore Perry farm in South Kingstown:

THE BIRTHPLACE OF
COMMODORE
OLIVER HAZARD PERRY
U. S. N.
WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY
AND THEY ARE OURS
SEPTEMBER 10, 1813

A War of 1812 manuscript muster roll has been presented to the Society by Mr. Byron A. Pierce.

The song of the Rhode Island privateer *Montgomery*, 1776, is printed in the "Rhode Island Mariner" for April, 1927, from the original manuscript in the Rhode Island Historical Society archives.

Two new Rhode Island books are:

The Casey Family of East Greenwich, an illustrated pamphlet, by Charles A. Meader.

The Autobiographic Memoirs of Hon. Patrick J. McCarthy, edited by his daughter Mary Josephine Bannon.

Just as this issue of the "Collections" was going to press, Dr. Francis George Curtis of Newton, Mass., presented to the Society as a memorial to his father, the late George William Curtis,

a collection of manuscripts belonging to James Burrill, Jr., U. S. Senator from Rhode Island 1817 to 1820.

The State Bureau of Information recently established in the Secretary of State's Office has issued a very interesting folder "Rhode Island a little bit of all outdoors" designed to show tourists the attractive features of the State. The principal roads are mapped separately with illustrations taken along the route. The increasing interest shown by visitors in historic spots is wisely recognized by the insertion of pictures of famous or historic scenes and houses.

The Birthplace of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry

Your Committee on Marking Historical Sites have examined all authorities available to them and are satisfied that Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry was born in the family homestead at the farm about two miles from the village of Wakefield. The house was torn down by the Commodore about 1815 and the lumber used to build a small house on or near the site of the homestead. This house is still inhabited.

He was nationally famous after the Battle of Lake Erie, and it is to be expected that many investigators would seek information of his life. There were forty volumes, pamphlets, and newspaper clippings consulted. A few claimed Newport as his birthplace. There is no authority for the statement. It is probably due to the fact that his home was there at the time of the War of 1812. All other authorities give his birth in South Kingstown.

In 1854 a biography written by Alexander Slidell Mackenzie was published. In the preface he states that it was written at the request of Dr. Grant Champlin Perry the Commodore's son. The author in Vol 1, Page 20, states that the Commodore's parents resided at the homestead. It is probable that if Commodore Perry was born elsewhere the author would have so stated. Doctor Perry must have read the volume and would note any such omission.

A member of the committee has seen a letter of Mrs. R. E. Smith, niece of the Commodore, that states that her Uncle Oliver was born at the homestead.

John G. Perry many years Town Clerk at South Kingstown in a letter to the Narragansett Times in 1897 quotes Mrs. Commodore Rogers, Miss Sarah Wallace Perry his sisters, and Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry to the same effect. James N. Arnold in the Narragansett Register Vol. 2, Page 155 states that Mrs. Stedman, daughter of Mary Teft, says that her mother, a cousin of the Commodore, was present at his birth at the homestead. E. H. Hazard, a prominent lawyer at South Kingstown, repeats and endorses the statement.

The Rev. Calbraith Bourne Perry, D.D., in an address at Cambridge, N. Y., April 13, 1909, states that Oliver was born on the home farm and that Captain Perry, his father, was assured by Judge Perry, the Commodore's grandfather, that his family should stay there. This is reasonable as Captain Perry was absent at sea much of the time.

Henry C. Perry in a letter published in the Chicago Tribune, Feb. 11, 1884, repeats the same statement as does Mills in his volume, page 6.

Mrs. Caroline E. Robinson claims that the birth took place at the William Rodman house near Rocky Brook in South Kingstown, but does not furnish any evidence to support the statement.

Considering that nine members of the Perry family including his son, his brother, two sisters, a niece and a cousin believe that the Commodore was born on the family estate, we feel safe in rejecting the unsupported claim of Mrs. Robinson. We are of the opinion that a suitable tablet should be erected in the appropriate place.

Charles Dean Kimball
for the Committee on Marking Historical Sites

General Varnum House

The mansion of General James Mitchell Varnum stands on Pearce Street on the steep hill overhanging East Greenwich village not far from the Governor Greene homestead.

The house, with its dignified terraced approach, spacious lawns and tree shaded grounds, now alas sadly reduced from the original tweny acres, seems the appropriate residence of a colonial squire.

A spacious hallway, with the broad staircase set well back at the farther end, gives entrance to the four main rooms. To the right is the best room or parlor wainscotted in large panels and with a fine mantel with a broken pediment top, and broad fireplace.

To the left is the living room with plainer wainscotting and mouldings, crosslet pannelled mantel with fireplace set with tiles.

Above is the Washington and Lafayette chamber with the portraits of these worthies.

Coming from Massachusetts, after a brief, but probably lively period at Harvard College, Varnum entered Brown University, then Rhode Island College at Warren. He graduated in the first class, 1769, at the age of twenty, and after studying law with the Attorney-General of the Colony was admitted to the bar and settled down to practise at East Greenwich, where in 1773 he purchased a tract of land above the village, and began doubtless with inherited means the present mansion, to which he brought his wife Martha, daughter of Cromwell Child, a merchant of Warren and a man of many interests. Dr. Ezra Stiles of Newport, and later of Yale, alludes to him at this time as "a deistical lawyer," and speaks of Mr. Varnum "who was expelled from Harvard College turned Baptist afterward and went to Rhode Island College and a very free thinker in Religion highly pleased with universal salvation and of doubtful Morals (Piety) but a sensible & smart man."

Law was soon deserted for arms. Stirred by martial spirit, Varnum was instrumental in organizing the Kentish Guards, a chartered militia company at East Greenwich, and became

General Varnum's Homestead, East Greenwich, R. I.

their Colonel. On receiving the news of the battle of Lexington, Colonel Varnum mustered his men, and it is said within three hours was on the march to assist the Massachusetts minute men.

John Howland, the Providence barber-banker, told in his old age how he saw the Guards pass through the streets of Providence on their way to Boston. "Nathanael Greene afterwards the General was a private in this Company. I had often seen him and knew him well. His left leg or thigh was shorter than the other which caused his musket at every step to shake, and did not accord with the steady position of those on his right and left; but when I saw him afterwards on horseback he rode well. Colonel Varnum marched his command as far as Pawtucket where he met an express who said that the enemy had returned to Boston. He then returned to Greenwich."

When the Colony soon after raised an armed force, known ambiguously as an Army of Observation, Nathanael Greene was appointed Brigadier General and Varnum Colonel.

Varnum served at Roxbury, the siege of Boston, and the battle of Long Island and White Plains. The next year the General Assembly of Rhode Island appointed him "Brigadier General of all the forces now raised or to be raised within this state," and a few months later he was appointed by Congress to the same rank in the Continental forces. He had charge of the defense of Red Bank.

During the trying and memorable winter at Valley Forge, Varnum was characterized by Washington as "the light of the camp." He was a strong partisan of Washington, writing to General Greene from Valley Forge "You have often heard me say, and, I assure you I feel happy in the truth of it, that next to God Almighty, and my Country, I revere General Washington and nothing fills me with so much indignation as the villany of some who dare speak disrespectfully of him."

Under General Sullivan he served in the disappointing battle of Rhode Island.

General Varnum has been sometimes credited with the introduction of negroes into our army, when enlistments were lagging in 1778, to fill the Rhode Island quota for the Continental Army.

Varnum, writing to Washington regarding the delay, said: "It is imagined that a battalion of negroes can easily be raised." Washington forwarded the letter to Governor Greene, and the General Assembly, supporting themselves by General Washington, General Greene and historical precedents, provided for the enlistment of slaves, who should thereby become free, and whose owners should be compensated. The act did not pass without the filing of a vigorous protest, and was only in force about four months. The treasurer's accounts show that less than one hundred slaves were paid for. The glowing descriptions of their valor and services are not justified by the facts and seem to have been part of the anti-slavery propaganda.

In 1779, feeling that affairs at home demanded his attention, he resigned his commission in the Continental Army, and returned to civil life and the practice of the law. The state, however, speedily appointed him Major General of the militia, which office he held till he left the state in 1788. For a brief period he was in active military service under Comte de Rochambeau.

Like its neighbor the Governor Greene homestead, memories of revolutionary officers are associated with this mansion. Stories are told of the presence here of Washington, who, when on his way from Boston to Lebanon, occupied the northeast chamber, and Sullivan and Rochambeau, but chiefly of the gay times when Lafayette and his fellow officer passed a week at "Varnum's Folly."

Lafayette is said to have occupied the historic chamber with his valet on a cot outside the door. Perhaps it was on this occasion that Lafayette presented to General Varnum the handsome punch bowl, now treasured by the Rhode Island Society of the Cincinnati.

Rochambeau's commissary general, Claude Blanchard, relates that he dined at General Varnum's house and conversed with him in Latin. President Stiles records that, when he dined with Rochambeau at Newport, the conversation was likewise in Latin. Either military men were more conversant with Latin then than now, or the conversation must have been meager.

General Varnum represented the state in the Continental Congress 1780-82 and again 1786-7.

His practice was important, "no one thought himself safe in a trial without him."

Three at least of his office students became lawyers of note in the state, each filling at various times the office of attorney general—Henry Goodwin of Boston, son-in-law of Governor Bradford of Bristol; Ray Greene, eldest son of Governor William Greene; and Daniel Updike, heir of the Richard Smith Garrison and the Updike estate, who was for one year only attorney general, an office which his grandfather held in the good old days for twenty seven years.

As a lawyer he is mentioned in American constitutional history for his plea in the famous case of Trevett vs. Weeden. John Weeden, a Newport butcher, in violation of a recent statute, refused to accept from John Trevett paper currency in payment for a piece of meat. Varnum appeared for Weeden, and made a strong argument that the act was unconstitutional, and should so be declared by the judges. This point was not, however, passed upon, and the case was dismissed for want of jurisdiction.

Two hearers have described his oratory. That entertaining gossiper, Elkanah Watson, (Memoirs), says: "Mr. Varnum was one of the most eminent lawyers and distinguished orators in the Colonies. I first heard him deliver a Masonic oration in 1774. Until that moment I formed no conception of the powers and charm of oratory. The effect of the splendid exhibition has remained for forty eight years indelibly fixed upon my mind. I then compared his mind to a beautiful parterre from which he was enabled to pluck the most gorgeous and fanciful flowers in his progress to enrich and embellish his subject."

Thomas Paine, years afterwards, meeting a Rhode Island lawyer inquired news of General Varnum, and said "he had on many occasions listened to him as a public speaker with great delight. He characterized the style of his oratory even to the musical intonations of his voice. He said he had listened to many of the best speakers in America and Europe and that in point of charming elocution James Mitchell Varnum was the most eloquent man he had ever heard speak, and he thought it strange that his name had not attained more celebrity."

Paine is responsible for the following story of the beginning of their acquaintance, "While Varnum was commanding in the Jerseys Paine late one evening took a stroll among the tents. He saw a light in one of these, he entered and found an officer with long hair dishevelled on his shoulders seated over a few embers in deep and solitary thought. Upon entering into conversation he found him to be, he said, one of the most interesting of men. This incident was the commencement of the intimacy and friendship between them which continued until Paine left the country."

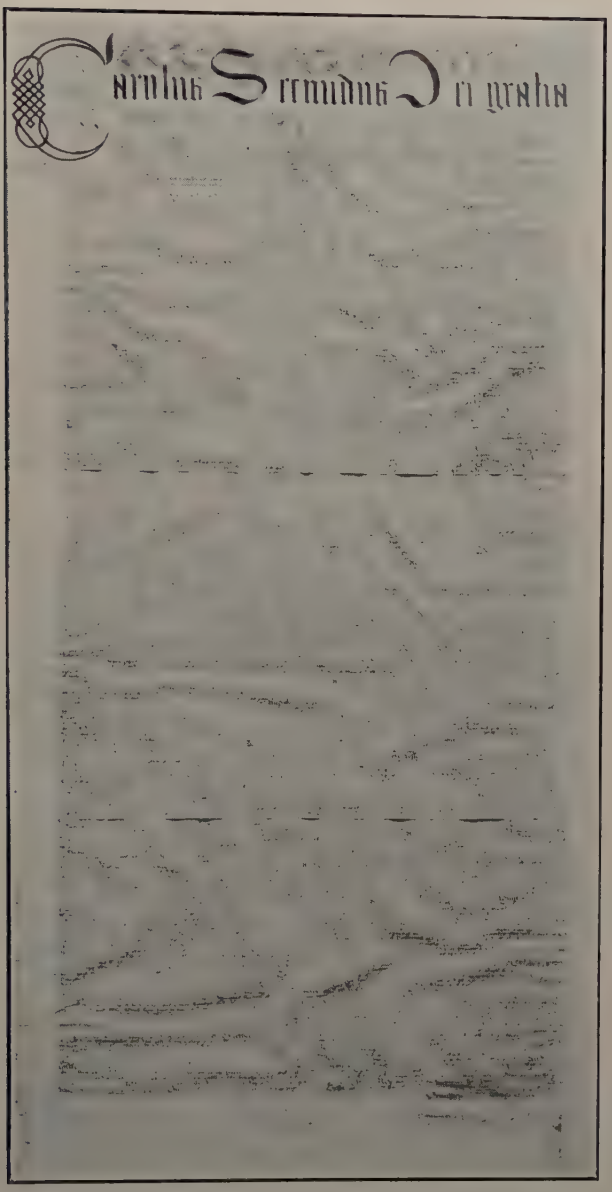
It is probably that while in Providence, endeavoring to assist the 5% impost, Paine was a guest at the Varnum mansion.

Wilkins Updike, the chronicler of the Narragansett Country, described, rather minutely, General Varnum as he appeared in court "with his brick-colored coat trimmed with gold lace, buckskin small clothes with gold lace knee bands, silk stockings (General Barton and himself being the only gentlemen that wore boots all day at that period) with a high delicate and white forehead with a cowlick on the right side, eyes prominent and of a dark hue, his complexion rather florid. Somewhat corpulent, well proportioned and fully formed for strength and agility; large eyebrows nose straight and rather broad, teeth perfectly white, a profuse head of hair, short on the forehead, turned up some, and deeply powdered and clubbed."

He was one of the directors of the Ohio Company in which he had invested considerable money, and when the Northwest Territory was formed in 1787, he was appointed one of the United States Judges for that territory. He reached Marietta in June 1788, and delivered there an oration on July 4th which was speedily printed. "Thus in the fertile soil of Ohio by a Rhode Island man, the first seeds of western eloquence were sown." To this characterization of the language of the oration the modern reader will easily assent.

But his health was already impaired perhaps by too generous living. The change from a comfortable home, surrounded by many congenial friends, to a frontier post in a new country, even though possessing a Campus Martius, a Via Sacra, and a Capitolium, was depressing. He died January 10, 1789, and his funeral oration was pronounced by a fellow Rhode Islander, Dr. Solomon Drowne, who returned to settle at Mount Hygeia, Rhode Island, and become Professor of Botany at Brown University.

The General's estate passed to his wife, the mansion later coming into the possession of the Greene family. It was at one time the residence of the late chief justice, George A. Brayton.



The duplicate of the Charter of 1663

The Duplicate of The Charter

When Dr. John Clarke who obtained for Rhode Island the royal Charter of 1663 died, he had in his possession an authenticated copy of the Charter which the General Assembly November 14, 1678, appointed a Committee to demand and receive from his executor.

The Committee obtained this copy and gave a receipt November 15, 1678 for the duplicate of the Charter; sealed with yellow wax, containing three sheets in parchment." (R. I. Col. Records vol. III, p. 25) This duplicate was committed to the care of the Deputy Governor.

At the December session 1686 the Assembly ordered that according to practice "the duplicate of his Majesty's gracious Charter" be brought to the Assembly by the late Deputy Governor now elected Governor and committed to the care and keeping of the present Deputy Governor.

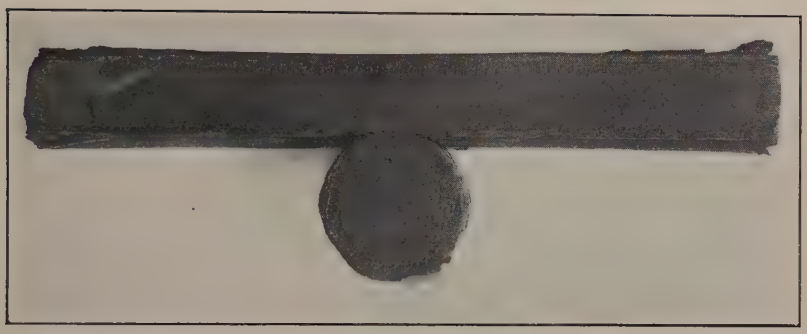
The duplicate was sent for and so delivered being "safely in folio and seal, under the yellow wax in no ways defaced."

It continued to be the practice to place the Charter under the care of the Governor and entrust the duplicate to the Deputy Governor.

In 1858 John R. Bartlett the Secretary of State reported that the duplicate was in the Secretarys office "and in excellent preservation." At the January session the same year the General Assembly ordered the copy framed and deposited in the cabinet of the Rhode Island Historical Society for safe keeping. In 1907 this was a portion of the historical exhibition at the Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition.

It now hangs on the stairway in the fireproof wing of the cabinet of the Rhode Island Historical Society. It is in three parchment sheets which have been fastened together and framed. The seal has disappeared but the holes in the last sheet of parchment show where it was attached.

The ornamental heading does not contain the portrait of King Charles and is much plainer than that of the Charter. A Latin preamble mentions the date of the original Charter, "the eighth day of July last" while the attestation clause also in Latin gives the date of the copy as "the 19th day of May in the sixteenth of the reign."



Box in which the Royal Charter was sent from England.

The Charter Box

While superintending the removal of the State property in 1900 from the old State House to the new Hon. Ernest L. Sprague, the present Secretary of State discovered in the attic story a curious old leather covered box which he identified from a well-nigh obliterated label as the original box in which the King Charles Charter was brought from England and in which it was kept for many years. Appreciating its value he removed it to the new State House where it is now preserved with the original Charter in a safe in the office of the Secretary of State.

The first mention of the box is at "a very great meeting and assembly of the freeman of the Collony of Providence Plantations at Newport, in Rhode Island in New England November the 24 1663" when it was voted "That the box in which the Kings gratious letters weare enclosed be opened and the letters with the broad seale thereto affixed be taken forth and read by Captayne George Baxter in the audiance and view of all the people; which was accordingly done and the sayd letters with his Majestyes Royale Stampe and the broad seale with much becominge gravity held upon high, and then returned into the box and locked up by the Governor in order to the safe keeping of it." (R. I. Colonial Records vol. 1, p. 509.)

The box is 35¾ inches long 4 inches wide and 3¾ inches high. The round box attached to the middle of the side for holding the seal is 6½ inches in diameter. The box is lined with printed sheets apparently from some edition of Erasmus.

It was the custom for the General Assembly to place the Charter in the care of the Governor and upon a change of Governors to appoint a committee to receive the document from the retiring official and present it to the Assembly. The Assembly after inspection passed to the new Governor.

In 1664 it was ordered "That upon all occasions that the Generall Assembly have to meet either upon adjournments or sett times appoynted in the first place, it is thought good that the pattent be read." R. I. C. R. vol. 3, p. 61.

But once at least the reading was omitted for in 1690 "this Assembly being met, had determined to have a copy of the Charter read, but the Recorder and several of his family being sick of the small-pox, whereby the Assembly is prevented from reading of it; no copy attested being present, therefore have thought meet to make record wherefore they cannot do it now." (R. I. Col. Rec. vol. 3, p. 278.)

This would seem to indicate that at this time the Charter was in the hands of the Recorder or Secretary, which would be explained by the tradition that when Governor Andros on his visit to Newport demanded the surrender of the Charter, Governor Walter Clarke was unable to find it as he had handed it for safekeeping to his brother Weston Clarke who in 1690 was the Recorder of the Colony.

Colonial Heraldry

(continued from page 100)

WANTON

The Wanton Arms are given by Vermont (*Amer. Heral.* 136) as "Argent a chevron sable," with the crest "A plume of seven ostrich feathers: three argent, two sable and two vert." There is no evidence that the American Wantons ever used this crest, which Vermont copied from Burke, who ascribed it to the Wantons of Huntingdonshire, who used this crest with a differenced coat, viz: "Argent a chevron sable in the dexter chief point an annulet of the second." Crozier copied Vermont in this error.

The seal of John Wanton, mentioned in the *Heraldic Journal,* can not now be found.

ARNOLD

The arms on the gravestone of Benedict Arnold, Junior, (1642-1727) at Newport are "three escallops, in fesse point a mullet." The colors are not shown. Papworth gives "Argent three escallops sable" for Arnaway or Arnold of co. Buckingham. Benedict Arnold, Junior, was over thirty years old when his grandfather, William Arnold of Somersetshire, England,

and Providence, R. I., died. From the fact that Benedict Arnold, Junior, was old enough to have heard from his father and his grandfather, (who were both born and brought up in England), what the family arms were, and from the fact that the arms used on his gravestone resemble in a way those of an obscure Arnold family, and not of a prominent Arnold family, whose arms might readily be seen and appropriated, it follows that these arms of the gravestone are probably his ancestral arms. If the mullet was for difference, the stone-cutter was evidently unaware of it, for he cut it too large, and also reproduced it as the crest above the helmet, where a mark of difference for the third son would scarcely be expected to appear as the main device.

A photograph of this gravestone bears an undated nineteenth century pencil note "Or three escallops sable." No authority is given, nor has been found for these colors.

A manuscript drawing of the Arnold arms, found among the Cranston papers in the Rhode Island Historical Society archives, which certainly was made after the marriage in 1727 of James Collins and Mary Arnold, (niece of Benedict Arnold, Junior), and which Dr. Bowditch believes was probably made in the second quarter of the century, and was perhaps the copy of an earlier drawing, shows the Arnold arms as "Azure, on a chevron

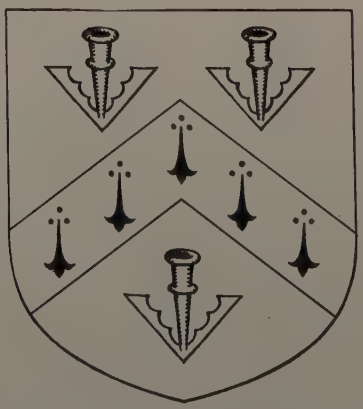
From Cranston Papers in the Society's Library

or between three escallops (color not given), a mullet (for difference?)." The crest is an escallop. No authority is given for these arms. A later pencil note referring to the mullet as "of the third son" is apparently of no authority. As both Benedict Arnold, Senior and Junior, were eldest sons, this mark, if of cadency, would seem to refer to the branching of the family in England, and in this respect is similar to the use of the crescent by John Greene, Junior. The mullet in the chevron suggests the possibility that the chevron was accidentally omitted by the stone-cutter who carved the gravestone. On the other hand, if the chevron is correct, the similarity of the arms to those of the Arnolds of Buckinghamshire fades materially.

It is barely possible that the addition of the chevron and the change in the color of the field may be in reality earlier marks of difference. In regard to the recognized marks of cadency, or difference, Copinger wrote:

> "It was not until the fourteenth century that these marks became general, for in the early days differences were effected by a variety of arbitrary variations of the arms, sometimes by changing the colours of the coats, or adding or omitting some charge, often by substituting one Ordinary for another and occasionally enclosing the Shield in a Bordure. It is no doubt to this practice that we may attribute the various slight differences in the coats of arms as borne in the present day by various families of the same name."

The arms on the gravestone of Benedict Arnold would seem to be more probably the arms of the William Arnold family, than the arms used on the gravestone of Oliver Arnold of Providence, who died in 1770, viz.: "A chevron ermine between three pheons." (*Her. Jour.* III:167). These arms were, as far as we know, first used in 1770, in the period in which arms are said to have been misappropriated in colonial New England.



They were those of a prominent Arnold family, and were illustrated in the 1716 edition of Kent's *Heraldry,* and in the 1724 edition of Guillim's *Heraldry,* a copy of which volume may have been in New England as early as 1767, (*Her. Jour.* I:6). Although probably not belonging to the William Arnold family of Rhode Island, these arms have been used extensively by them since 1770, and apparently were influential in leading Mr. Somerby to compile his pedigree of the Arnold family, which traces the Rhode Island Arnolds' alleged descent from the Arnolds of Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire. This pedigree was proven incorrect by Mr. Edson S. Jones in an article in the *N. E. H. & G. Register* for January1915, (See also *R. I. H. S. C.* XIV:33).

The mother of Benedict Arnold, Junior, was Damaris Westcott, and J. R. Bullock, in his *Incidents in the Life and Times of Stukeley Westcott,* gives the Westcott arms as "Argent a chevron between three escallops sable," which bears a considerable resemblance to the arms on the gravestone, and gives rise to the unlikely theory that the arms on the gravestone were intended for those of Arnold's maternal grandfather, (Cf. *R. I. H. S. C.* XIV:76). A further investigation shows that the arms mentioned by Bullock as Westcott arms are really Lyttleton arms, that became quartered in the armorial bearings of the descendants of Thomas Westcott, who married the daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Lyttleton, (*Visit of Devon.* p. 302, *Harl. Soc. Pub.* 6).

Burke lists the arms of one family of Arnold of Gloucestershire as "Gules a chevron ermine between three escallops or."

Mr. Jones, in the article already quoted, has shown that there were two distinct Arnold families in Rhode Island by proving that the two emigrants, William and Thomas, were not brothers. Indeed there is no evidence at present that they were even related.

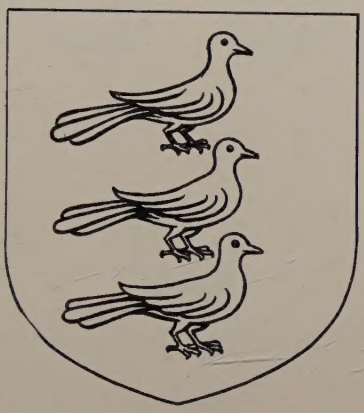
Oliver Arnold, the attorney general of Rhode Island, who died October 9, 1770, in the 35th year of his age, according to his armorial gravestone (*Her. Jour.* III:167), was born in Glocester, R. I., on August 7, 1736, the son of Israel Arnold and Waite Mowry, both of Smithfield, (*Glo. Rec.*). This Israel

Arnold was son of John, son of Richard, son of Thomas Arnold, of Watertown, Mass., and Providence, R. I., the emigrant, (Austin 240, 241 and Updike's *Memoirs of the Rhode Island Bar*), notwithstanding some unsupported statements that he was of the family of Benedict Arnold. This confusion may have arisen from the use of the given names, Israel and Oliver, in both Arnold families, and from a lack of genealogical knowledge. This genealogical confusion, together with the fact that the Arnold arms, as used on the Oliver Arnold stone, were accessible in a printed book, militate against the probability that these arms had been inherited from generation to generation, yet it is possible that Thomas Arnold may have been descended from the Arnolds of Gloucestershire, who, according to Kent (1716), used as arms "Gules, a chevron ermine, between three pheons, or," with the crest "A demi tiger or pelletty."

The descendants of Benedict Arnold, the traitor, (the grandson of Benedict Arnold, Junior), used the arms: "Gules three pheons argent, on a chief of the second, a bar nebulée azure," with the crest "A demi-tiger sable, bezantée, maned and tufted or, holding a broad arrow, stick gules, feathers and pheon argent," (Burke's *Landed Gentry*, editions of 1847 and 1882; *Her. Jour.* III:8). These arms were confirmed to Richard Arnold of London, haberdasher, in 1611 at which time the crest was "given" to him, (*Visit of London, Harl. Soc. Pub.* XV:25, and *Misc. Grants of Arms, Harl. Soc. Pub.* LXXVI, 8.)

General Benedict Arnold could not have been descended from this Richard Arnold, haberdasher, who was contemporary with Nicholas Arnold, grandfather of the first Benedict, and no evidence has ever been produced to show that these two sixteenth century Arnolds were related. Richard Arnold of London, goldsmith, uncle of Thomas Arnold of New England, could not be identical with Richard, the haberdasher. No evidence has ever been produced showing that the Arnold families of Rhode Island ever used or claimed the arms of Richard Arnold, the haberdasher.

HARRIS



Two gravestones in the North Burial Ground in Providence bear coats-of-arms supposed to be Harris. The device is three birds (martlets or pigeons) contourné in pale. From the fact that the charges are contourné, it seems probable that the stone cutter followed the matrix of a seal, as occurred in the case of the Sanford gravestones. The stones, on which these arms appear, are those on the graves of the two daughters of William Harris; Sarah, who died in 1723, aged 21, and Dorcas, who died in 1745, aged 41, the wife of Daniel Smith. (*Her. Jour.* III: 158). No such arms are listed under Harris in Burke nor are given by Papworth. This William Harris was son of Thomas Harris, and grandson of Thomas Harris, the emigrant, who settled in Providence.

SMITH

Richard Smith, Junior, of Cocumscussoc, Rhode Island, used an armorial seal on letters dating from 1670 to 1690, now preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society library, *Winthrop Papers*, XVIII:96-115, and the Connecticut Archives, *Colonial Boundaries* I:131. The arms are a chevron between three leopard's faces. The colors are not given. (*R. I. H. S. C.* XV:106). Kent (1716) gives "Argent a chevron between three leopard's faces gules" for Smith of London, and Burke ascribes these arms to Smith of Huntingdon. Richard Smith used a fleur-de-lis as a crest, but the Smiths of London and of Huntingdon used a leopard's face and crescent.

Richard Smith's armorial seal was handed down in the Updike family, and was used by Smith's grand-nephew, Richard Updike, in 1732. (R. I. H. M. V:68, where the leopards are called foxes). Richard Smith, Senior, held property in Gloucestershire, England, but his ancestry has not been traced.